

*An Alarm to a careless World.*

---

A

# DISCOURSE

Occasioned by the late

## EARTHQUAKES,

Preached November 30, 1755,

BEING THE

First SUNDAY in ADVENT,

A T

St. DUNSTAN's in the WEST.

---

The FIFTH EDITION.

---

By WILLIAM ROMAINE, Lecturer.

Watch therefore, for ye know neither the Day nor the Hour wherein the Son of Man cometh. Matt. xxv. 13.



---

LONDON:

Printed for J. WORRALL, at the Dove in Bell-yard,  
near Lincoln's-Inn; E. WITHERS, at the Seven  
Stars, near the Temple-Gate in Fleet-street; and  
R. WITHY and J. RYALL, at Hogarth's-Head,  
opposite Salisbury-court, Fleet-street. MDCC LV.

(Price Six-Pence.)

БЛАГОДАРСТВИЕ

ЗНАЧОНИЕ

БЛАГОДАРСТВИЯ

БЛАГОДАРСТВИЯ

БЛАГОДАРСТВИЯ

БЛАГОДАРСТВИЯ

БЛАГОДАРСТВИЯ

БЛАГОДАРСТВИЯ

БЛАГОДАРСТВИЯ

БЛАГОДАРСТВИЯ

БЛАГОДАРСТВИЯ



## P R E F A C E.

**M**Y lord of London in his letter concerning the late earthquakes, has these words, "As to you my brethren of the clergy, who share with me the care of the souls in these populous cities, let me exhort you (though I trust you want not to be exhorted) to awaken the people, to call them from the lethargy in which they have too long lived, and make them see their own danger. Speak to them, persuade them, as knowing the terrors of the Lord. Speak to their hearts and consciences with such plainness as becomes the ministers of the gospel; tell them in season and out of season, that unless they repent, they must perish. If the warnings we have had are a call to the people to repentance, remember they are still

## P R E F A C E.

“ stronger calls on us to preach re-  
“ pentance, and to discharge the duty  
“ we owe to God and his church, and  
“ to the flock of Christ over whom we  
“ are placed. May this work of God  
“ prosper in our bands!” Amen, say  
I. This advice is worthy of a christian  
bishop, and I wish all the clergy  
in England would follow it. I have  
endeavoured to follow it in this plain  
discourse, and although it was drawn  
up and printed in an hurry, yet it is  
seasonable and necessary. The design  
of it was to rouse careless sinners out  
of their lethargy, and the necessity  
of calling upon them is now evident.  
I waited, while the former editions  
were selling, to see how they would  
be affected with the desolation, which  
God hath wrought in the earth. But  
they are not alarmed. They lay it  
not to heart, but go on secure in  
the ways of sin, as if no such dread-  
ful providence could befall them. They  
fortify themselves in their security by  
several

## P R E F A C E.

several very absurd opinions, which only to mention is to confute.

It is one very prevailing opinion, that earthquakes are not common in this country. They are not. But the less common they are, the more should they alarm us when they come ; for there is a providence over this country, and when He orders, our land shall shake and reel like a drunkard. He sent two earthquakes lately, to stir us up to repentance, and he who sent these can send a third, and London may share the fate of Lisbon.

It is another opinion, that earthquakes are the effects of second causes. Be it so. Then there is a first cause on whom they depend.

But the learned can give a philosophical account of them. What ! such an account, I suppose, as they did of the earthquakes in the year 1750, by changing their names into airquakes, and then they were explained philosophically. It will not be so easy to account

## P R E F A C E.

count for the shaking of the land for several hundred miles, and of the sea for several thousands at once, which was the case in these last earthquakes. What natural cause will they assign equal to this effect?

There is another opinion, from which men promise themselves security, and that is the great wickedness of the Portuguese. Doubtless they were sinners, but not above all the inhabitants of the earth. We rival them in immorality, and we exceed them in infidelity. They were cut off in judgment. We are spared in mercy. From their punishment if we take no warning, we shall be greater sinners than they could be: for if neither the goodness of God can soften our hardened hearts, nor his judgments terrify us, then we may fear, that when he draws the sword of justice, we who would not cry for mercy at such a time as this, shall receive judgment without mercy.

Careless

## P R E F A C E.

Careless sinners may flatter themselves with notions of safety, but unless they leave their sins they cannot be safe. While the almighty is their enemy they can have no peace. May he open their eyes to see this truth practically, that they may find the necessity of being at peace with God. The way and means thereto is to sue for mercy through Jesus Christ by faith and repentance: but there is such a general and violent opposition to this method of reformation, that we have more to fear from the anger of God against this dreadful sin, than even from the trembling of the earth under us. May the prayers and humiliation of the righteous avert the judgments of God due to this and all the other crying sins of this kingdom.

AMOS



the next mornin' as I did my ev'ning ev'ry day



the next mornin' as I did my ev'ning ev'ry day

the next mornin' as I did my ev'ning ev'ry day

**A M O S iv. 12.**

*Prepare to meet thy G O D.*

**T**HE church calls upon us, by the present solemnity, to bring into our most serious thoughts the advent of our blessed Lord in the flesh, when he came to visit us in great humility. He appeared upon earth in the character of a meek, suffering, dying Saviour. But there is another advent, not far off, when all flesh shall see him in the majesty of the Godhead. His first advent was in the lowest humiliation, his second advent will be in the highest exaltation. And we wait for that great day, when he will come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, hoping to be found, when he comes, watching and praying, that we may rise with him to the life immortal.

We do not pretend to know the precise time of his coming: for *of that day, and that hour, knoweth no man*, but the judge himself has given us some signs and marks,

B by

by which we might be as certain, that he is nigh and standeth before the door, as that summer is nigh, when the fig-tree putteth forth her green figs. And whenever we see these scripture signs and marks, it is our office and duty, as faithful watchmen, to give you notice, that you may be ready, least your Lord should come in a day, when ye look not for him, and in an hour that ye are not aware of, and should cut you asunder, and appoint you your portion with the hypocrites, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. On this account the subject, appointed by the church for this day, falls in seasonably with these remarkable providences, which have been lately manifested in this and other countries. And I have therefore chosen a scripture proper to awaken your attention to the second advent of Christ. It is exceedingly awful and solemn. The very reading of it must make a deep impression upon every serious mind. *Prepare to meet thy God*, the eternal and almighty God, who is coming in all his glory to judgment, and if the righteous scarcely be saved in that great day, where shall the wicked and the infidel appear? They will then have no excuse for their sins — self-condemned they will stand with guilt and horror before his tribunal, to hear their sentence of condemnation past, which is never never to be reversed. So that unless an eternity

eternity of pain and misery be the best thing we can work out in our short life, we should now think of making some provision for an eternity of happiness. We should now be preparing to meet our God. As we must meet him soon, it should be our whole business to get ready and to be prepared, that whenever he comes we may enter in with him into the joy of our Lord. This is the instruction which I shall draw from the Text, *Prepare to meet thy God.*

*First,* We here learn that God our Saviour, who once came in great humility to visit us, is now preparing to meet us in judgment. And,

*Secondly,* We should therefore be prepared to meet him. And,

*Thirdly,* I shall endeavour to stir you up to the true gospel preparation, that whenever our Saviour comes, you may lift up your heads with joy, knowing that your redemption draweth nigh. And

May the ever blessed Spirit, from whom the preparation must come, assist us with his grace, that our meditation first upon our Saviour's preparing to meet us in judgment, may be the means of preparing us to meet him. *Prepare to meet thy God.*

The

The suffering Jesus was united to the eternal God, and so united that as the reasonable soul and flesh are one man, so God and man are one Christ. At his first coming he visited us in great humility, and the Godhead was veiled under a covering of flesh, but at his second coming all flesh shall see that Jesus is God indeed. Every eye shall then behold the divine glory of the suffering Saviour, and they who once pierced him at his bitter passion, or since with their horrid blasphemies, shall then confess to their everlasting shame, that he is the almighty God of heaven and earth. On this account we should be prepared to meet him. At the time appointed he came to suffer for the sins of the World, and at the time appointed he will come to judgment. His second advent is as certain as his first. It was foretold in the old testament, and promised in the new; and the scriptures cannot be broken. God had revealed it in the clearest manner to the patriarchs, so that *Enoch* the 7th from *Adam* prophesied of it, saying — *Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* The Father of the faithful knew that he was to come to execute judgment

judgment upon all, and speaks with confidence, *shall not the judge of all the earth do right?* and *Job* had the same holy confidence, when he made his supplication to his judge, and the solemnity of his coming to judgment, *Solomon* being a prophet foresaw, and has plainly described it in these words — *God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* And the judge himself has given us a very circumstantial description in three of the evangelists of the process of the great day, and has called upon us again and again, to be always ready and prepared for it. His apostles argue from the certainty of our appearing before the judgment seat of Christ, and frequently make use of these terrors of the Lord to persuade men to faith and repentance. And there is a very remarkable circumstance, which gives great weight to these authorities; when our Lord is describing the general judgment, he confirms his account with a promise, that he would come to judge the Jewish nation, before that generation should pass away. Accordingly he came; and there has not a tittle failed of what he foretold concerning the destruction of *Jerusalem*, or concerning the dispersion of the *Jews* over the face of the earth. It is then a matter of fact, that he has already acted as judge, and he will come to complete his office. It is not more certain,

tain, that the sun will rise to-morrow, than that he who judged the Jewish nation, will soon come to judge the whole earth. His second advent is fixed and determined to the fulness of time, as well as the first was. He will come in his glorious majesty at the last day. And in the mean time he comes with many signal strokes of vengeance to awaken a careless sleepy world. He visits the inhabitants of the earth with his judgments, that they may learn righteousness, and he has lately visited us with some of his heaviest judgments, and I hope many of you have been stirred up by them to prepare to meet your God. And it is high time we should be all prepared: for the marks and signs of his second advent are fulfilling daily. His coming cannot be far off. The day indeed and the hour are not known, but if you will compare the uncommon events, which our Lord says were to be the fore-runners of his coming to judgment, with what has lately happened in the world; you must conclude, that the time is at hand. He foretells us, that there should then be wars and rumours of wars: and are there not wars, and rumours of more wars? There were to be pestilences, and we have had the pestilence for more than ten years in this kingdom. There were to be great earthquakes in diverse places, and there have been earthquakes lately in many parts of the world, and in a far

far greater number than they ever were in any other age. And these earthquakes were to be attended with fearful sights, and did not many fearful sights in the element attend the two last earthquakes we had in this city? But the worst sign of all is the present decay of religion among us; this renders the rest more terrible, and makes it to be feared, that as we are ripe for destruction, so we may soon expect to have our candlestick removed: *for when the Son of man cometh, shall be find faith upon the earth?* says Christ. There will be so little, that he shall scarce find any. The true saving faith will be diminished from among the children of men; and it has for some time been banished out of the popish countries, and the reformed churches have lately fallen sadly from the faith, and have preserved very little more of christianity, than the mere name: and in our own church we have kept up the form of godliness, but we are so far from having the power, that we deny any persons can have it, and the few, who say they have it, are treated as madmen and enthusiasts. These are some of the infallible signs of our Lord's second advent. From them we are assured that it is not at a great distance. When we behold the fig-tree, and all the trees shooting forth, then we know that summer is near; and so likewise, when we see these things come to pass, we know that  
the

the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. It will not be long before the Son of man will come in the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory, and because we are assured that he will come soon, and yet know not the day nor the hour, we are therefore always waiting with watchfulness and prayer. Our Lord required us to be always in this devout frame of mind, when he closed the volume of revelation with these words, *surely I come quickly* — surely, says the Almighty Judge, *I come quickly to judgment* — to which the faithful reply, *Amen, even so come Lord Jesus*. Happy would it be for us all, if we were so well prepared to meet our God, that when we see the signs of his coming speedily, and hear him promise, *surely I come quickly*, then we might give our *Amen, even so come Lord Jesus*. And are you then, my brethren, not only ready, but also praying for his coming? Do you wait for it with faith, and are you looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ? If you are in this happy state, then you can cry out with joy, Lord we believe the promises, and we see the signs of thy speedy coming, even so, come Lord Jesus. But if you are not in this happy state, then I proceed

Secondly, To shew, that since Christ will soon come to judgment, you ought therefore

fore to be prepared to meet your God. He will come in all the glory of the Godhead, attended with the multitude of the heavenly host, and before him shall be gathered all nations. Every one of us must appear before his tribunal. We must meet the almighty God in judgment, when he cometh to take vengeance of his adversaries: and ought we not to be prepared for this awful meeting? We cannot resist the Almighty — we cannot fly from his presence — we cannot conceal one secret thought from him, and is it not then our interest to make the almighty Judge our friend? For what king going to make war against another king, fitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand; or else while the other is yet a great way off, he sendeth an embassage, and desirereth conditions of peace. When the king of kings cometh against you, armed with his omnipotence, you can have no hopes of safety, but in desiring conditions of peace. Your only way is to submit, and to try to make him your friend. Then you will be safe. So soon as you have secured the friendship of the sovereign Judge, and are under the protection of his almighty power, then you are prepared to meet him in judgment; and therefore since this preparation is the principal business of life, we

ought to labour to secure his friendship, as the means to it. And how then shall we make him our friend? Sin made him our enemy, and it is the guilt of sin in the conscience, which makes his coming to judgment terrible, and will make the eternal punishment of sin terrible indeed. Take away sin, and God is reconciled. Let the soul be cleansed from the pollution, and the conscience purged from the guilt of sin, and there will no fear remain of condemnation. The Judge will then be the Saviour, and we shall have no dread of his judgment, having already received the blessings of his salvation.

The gospel has proposed a plain method of bringing the mind into this happy state, and it is generally effected in the following manner. While the sinner lies secure in sin, he cannot be prepared to meet his God. He must be awakened. He must be deeply convinced of his guilt and danger, and under the sense of them, he must be humbled to the very dust. These are the first steps towards his preparation. The holy Spirit has now opened his eyes, and he sees his lost ruined condition. He beholds the God of nature at enmity with him, and all the powers in nature combined to destroy him, and if he be ever saved, it must be all free mercy: for in himself he is miserable and helpless, and therefore not daring to look up unto heaven, he smites upon his breast, saying,

ing, *God be merciful unto me a sinner.* Under these convictions he labours, which though painful for a time, yet being the door and entrance into salvation, are therefore a blessing, and the greater blessing, as they are the general way, by which God brings sinners unto himself: for the deeper and more distressing these convictions of sin are, the greater necessity will the sinner find of mercy, and the more earnestly will he seek, until he obtain it. And he has the infallible promise of God to encourage his seeking, *blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.* In God's own good time he begins to find his interest in this promise: he has faith to apply it to himself: he finds his soul filled with the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and has the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the holy Ghost, giving him all joy and peace in believing. And the sense of this pardoning love casteth out fear: for now he knows assuredly that Jesus Christ is his Saviour and his God: he finds daily proof of it in the change of his life and conversation. His will is now so intirely renewed, that he loves and delights to do the will of God, and he has grace and strength to run the way of his commandments; in which he will be found watching and praying, whenever his Lord comes, and will therefore be

always ready and prepared to go forth to meet him.

In this method the gospel prepares us to meet our God : It first convinces us of our sinful state, in which we are at enmity with God, and are not prepared to meet him ; and then convinces us of our reconciliation with him, of which we have the inward witness of the holy Spirit, bearing his testimony with our Spirits, that we are the children of God, and we have the outward witness of our lives and conversations, which we are able to conform to the rule of God's commandments. And then we have no doubt of our interest in the almighty Judge : for he has washed us from our sins in his blood, and has cloathed us with his all-perfect righteousness, and having thus saved us from our sins, we are thereby saved from the fear of judgment. And what can we then fear ? Our Saviour is the judge — his omnipotence is our protection — he comes in all his glory to take us up with him into his heaven, and to make us partakers of his everlasting joys. Blessed and for ever blessed are they, who are thus prepared to meet their God.

And are you then prepared in this manner ? Have you secured the friendship of the Judge, so that whenever he comes you are ready to meet him ? An eternity of happiness or misery depends on your preparation, and

and therefore I hope the vast importance of the subject will command your attention, while I am endeavouring under the

Third and last head, to apply what has been said as a motive to stir you up to be always prepared to meet your God. You have heard the character of the Judge. He is the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity — the Lord of Hosts is his name. He is the almighty Creator of all things visible and invisible — when he spake the word, they were made — He commanded and they stood fast — His providence ruleth over them all, and he upholdeth them by the word of his power. And this eternal, infinite and almighty God hath appointed a day, wherein he will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. Such is the glorious majesty of the Judge! And are you prepared to meet him? Have you no fear nor dread in your minds, if he should come this night? If you should this moment hear the loud trump of God calling the world to judgment, and should see the Lord of heaven and earth coming with thousands and ten thousands of angels and saints, how would it affect you? Consider, whether you

you could stand the shock ? Look into your hearts, and see if you be this moment in the very state, in which you would wish to appear before Chirst's tribunal. Put the question to yourselves, suppose the Judge were to come this hour, am I prepared to meet my God ? If you are prepared, you are happy. But if not, you are and will be miserable, unless I can persuade you to seek an interest in the Judge. And this I will attempt in the help of God, under two or three short remarks,

*First*, To them who do not believe the doctrine. These are deists and profest infidels, the open enemies of Jehovah and his Christ, who having denied him to be God, think they are out of the reach of his judgment. I hope there are not many of them here present. Some perhaps there may be ; for I know they are terribly affrighted at the late earthquakes, and their leaders have no way to quiet their consciences, but to assure them that they are mere natural effects, produced by natural causes ; as if it were less terrible to be destroyed by a natural cause, than to be destroyed by the God of nature. Poor little philosophers ! in what a despicable light do they appear, who are forced to exclude a providence, in order to get rid of their fears ? And so for safety, they take shelter in atheism : And let them talk ever so much of one supreme being, yet they

they are rank atheists ; for their one supreme being is one supreme nothing. God has been pleased to reveal his essence and personality to us, and his revealed account of himself they deny, and consequently whatever they set up against him, be it a God in one person, or thirty thousand Gods, it is all a mere imagination, a one supreme being without any existence. No wonder, they should live loose libertine lives, since they are without God in the world. And what can we do but pity and pray for these men, who have adopted this system of practical atheism ? Oh that the eternal Spirit would open their eyes, and if they have but a glimpse of truth, they will see that Jesus is God. And if they will not confess him here before men, there is a day coming, when they shall confess that he is a God indeed. At the glory of his appearance, these bold blasphemers, who now ridicule his divinity, will then be calling to the mountains to fall on them, and to the hills to cover them. The majesty of God the almighty Judge will strike them with terror, and when they are called before his throne, to give an account of the hard speeches, which they had spoken against him, they will stand guilty, and trembling, waiting for that righteous sentence, which will carry with it inexpressible misery, *Go ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and*

*and his angels.* Oh that these terrors of the Lord may sink deep into the heart of every unbeliever, who is now at open war with his Judge, while I am,

Secondly, Addressing myself to the careless sinners among you, who are, I fear, a great number. The generality of them who profess christianity live to this world, and seldom think about the next. Their pleasures and diversions are the chief object of their pursuit, and money and honour and power are sought after, that they may enjoy themselves the better. All worldly men are upon this scheme; and while they pursue it, they go on securely in their sins, and are careless about the concerns of eternity. Their hearts are engaged upon other matters, than preparing to meet their God. Their attachment to the world is the greatest obstacle to their preparation, and therefore we are forbidden to *love the world, or the things of the world, for if any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him.* And if the love of God be not in us, we cannot be prepared to meet him in judgment.

Consider this all ye who speak peace to your souls, while you indulge yourselves in sin. You believe that God will call you before his judgment-seat, and that if you live and die in your sins, you cannot escape the eternal punishment of them. You know not

not but the Judge may call you before him this night, and you are not prepared, and yet you have no concern about it. You sin on with the judgment-seat of Christ before your eyes, to which you may be brought before the next act of sin be finished. What can we think of this unaccountable conduct? Certainly men in their sober senses cannot act such an absurd part. It is against reason: for if these very men were setting out upon a journey of two or three hundred miles, they would make more preparation than they do for eternity. It is against self-interest: for who would take some present empty indulgences of sin, as an equivalent for eternal happiness? It is against all principles of good sense to prefer sin to holiness, and to choose hell before heaven. And it is destroying religion, whose sole business it is to prepare the soul to meet its God. And are any of you, my brethren, in this strange careless state? Do you act thus against reason and self-interest, against common sense and religion? You are guilty of all these inconfistencies, if the Judge should come in an hour, when ye look not for him. And he may come and find you unprepared as you are at present. You cannot promise yourselves an hour to prepare in. His judgments are now in the earth, and they are sent to rouse you out of your security. Oh that you would be awakened by them

and see your danger. Do you not suppose, that the inhabitants of *Lisbon* thought themselves as safe as you may do at present? They had no apprehensions of an earthquake. They did not imagine that God was going to destroy them that morning. But you hear how they were surprized and overthrown with a great destruction. While they were speaking, peace, peace, unto themselves, they were called and hurried in a moment to judgment. One had set his heart upon getting an handsome fortune, and was just sitting down to cast up his accounts, and he was cut off that moment, and called to judgment with a soul full of the love of money. Another intent upon his pleasures was feeding his imagination with a vile scene of indulgences, and his filthy foul was taken in the midst of this impurity, and brought before the all pure and holy God. One with an oath in his mouth was calling for damnation upon his soul, and it came while the words were in his mouth, and down he sunk into the pit of hell. Dreadful it is to think of the manner, in which they were surprized and cut off in their sins. Suppose such a judgment should be sent to this city at the same time of the day, how would it overtake sinners both high and low? The great, tired with the diversions of the preceding day, would be surprized in their sleep, and would awake in the

the eternal world full of hatred to Jesus Christ, and his people, and his holy faith. What can they expect from the Judge? And the lower people would be up, but at the devil's work, going on careless in their sins, lying, and cursing, and swearing, and blaspheming God, and snatched away with some horrid imprecation in their mouths. Why may not this happen to you, as well as to the inhabitants of *Lisbon*? Why may you not be thus cut off, and die in your sins, yea in the very act of sin? You have more reason to fear it, than they had: for your sins are greater than theirs. Think not that they were sinners above all the inhabitants of the earth, because they suffered such things. I tell you, nay; but except you repeat, you shall all likewise perish. The same immeasurabilities which reigned among them, reign also in this city; but the contempt of Jesus Christ, and his religion, and the opposition now made to the progress of the gospel by every method, but shedding of blood, from which God withholds the enemies hands, these are crimes of a deeper guilt, than the unhappy *Portuguese* had to answer for. The common people in those popish countries are kept in great ignorance, they have not the light of the gospel shining clearly among them, as you have, and therefore they were not guilty of that one damnable sin, which makes all your other sins so exceeding

ceeding sinful. You sin against the fullest conviction ; you reject the light of the gospel in your understandings, and you act against it in your lives ; and you sin on, when you are invited to forsake your sins and live. God sends his ministers to plead with you, but their counsel you reject with contempt. His good Spirit strives with you, but you resist and grieve him. You have the scriptures in your hands, and you may there read the danger of your careless way of life, but the scripture has no influence. If none of these motives can prevail, be assured, that your guilt will increase in proportion to the advantages you enjoy ; and the more reason there was for your being prepared to meet your God, the heavier will the condemnation be, if he should come and find you unprepared. May you lay these things to heart, and by the grace of the holy Spirit, now resolve to prepare for the coming of our almighty God and Saviour.

And if you have any desire to be prepared, there is one motive which ought to have great weight with you, and it is taken from a matter of fact. There are, God be praised, many persons in this city, several I hope in this Congregation, who have obtained the love and friendship of the supreme Judge. Look into their lives, and examine them closely. See how they are affected with the report of these judgments, which

which are now in the earth. You will find no dread, or fear in their minds. They are not afraid of any evil tidings. The inward peace and joy, which arise from the sense of God's loving them in Christ Jesus, are not lessened by any outward calamity. They know that he, who is the Lord of nature, will make all things work together for their good, and therefore their heart is established and will not shrink, though the earth should quake from its very foundations, and the hills should be carried into the midst of the sea. If the whole course of nature should be disturbed, they have nothing to fear. God is their friend. They are kept by the arms of the Almighty, and if the heavens should pass away, and the earth, and all that is therein should be burnt up, yet still they are safe. In life and death they can stay their minds upon God in perfect peace. You cannot deny, that there are Christians in this safe and happy state: for God has promised it them, and we declare that God is faithful and true. And if you believe it, how does it affect you? Do you find no desire to be as safe and happy as they are. Does no wish arise in your hearts, that you might be under the protection of the almighty God, and that he would set you on high out of the reach of publick calamity; so that whenever he comes to visit a sinful people laden with

with iniquity, and to be glorified in their destruction, then you may rejoice and be exceeding glad, knowing assuredly that your eternal redemption is at hand.

Lay all these considerations together, and they may strengthen your good resolutions. God is preparing to meet you in judgment, and eternity depends on your being prepared to meet him. You have no time to lose. He may come this night. And you are not prepared. What would your condition be, if he should call you unprepared? Therefore as you love your souls, apply to him this moment. Now go to the throne of grace for pardon, lest you should be called before the throne of glory unpardoned. Cry aloud for mercy. The Judge may still be intreated. Oh plead with him then, and be importunate, until he become your friend. Remind him of his love to sinners. Urge his bloody sweat, his bitter cross and passion, his cruel mockings, buffetings, and scourgings, endured all for sinners. Plead these with him, and lay before him the torments and the shame of the cross, and the piercing of his hands and feet, which are the engraving of his love to sinners, and be assured that tender heart cannot want love for them, which bled to death for their salvation. Hold on this plea, until he be gracious. Place your whole trust and confidence in the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, and doubt not but he will hear your

your plea, and will give you such a taste of his pardoning love, and so fill you with his graces, that you will be prepared to meet your God.

I hope he has heard my prayers for you this day, and if it be his blessed will has disposed you to seek an interest in the Judge of all the earth. He will come to judgment, and quickly. May the holy Spirit prepare us all to meet him. Oh! if he should come this night, how would he find you. Are you all ready? Is every one of you fit to die? Have you all got your lamps trimmed, and ye yourselves prepared; that if there should be a great cry made at midnight, Behold the bridegroom cometh, ye may be ready, and enter in with him to the marriage. And if he should call you by an earthquake, or by any other judgment, have you so sure an interest in him, that sudden death would be welcome? Think what an awful thing it would be, if you were to enter upon the eternal world this night, where your state is unalterably fixed for ever. O what continual preparation should you be making for eternity? For if you die unprepared, all is lost. Hell and torments are your everlasting portion. And if you are not quite in love with misery, now beg of God to shew you your danger, and to deliver you from it. The door of mercy is still open. Oh that you may find an entrance, and press forwards

wards with an holy violence, until you receive grace to prepare you to meet your God. And let us all agree to look up to him for it, in that excellent form of prayer, which our Church has appointed for this day.

“ Almighty God give us grace, that we  
 “ may cast away the works of darkness, and  
 “ put upon us the armour of light, now in the  
 “ time of this mortal life, in which thy Son  
 “ Jesus Christ came to visit us in great hu-  
 “ mility; that in the last day, when he shall  
 “ come again in his glorious majesty to judge  
 “ both the quick and dead, we may (*be  
 “ prepared to meet him and may*) rise to the  
 “ life immortal, through him who liveth  
 “ and reigneth with Thee and the Holy  
 “ Ghost now and ever. *Amen.*”

*F I N I S.*